

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-12 AID-20 EUR-25 NIC-01 RSR-01

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O 220216 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1940

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8915

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (P A R A O N E)

E. O. 11562: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MR 3 SITREP - 14 MAY TO 20 MAY, 1973

THE FOLLOWING SENT SAIGON FROM AMCONSUL BIEN HOA 19 MAY 73
REPEATED TO YOU FOR YOUR ACTION AND INFO. QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 0133

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS MILI VS

SUBJ: WEEKLY MR 3 SITREP - 14 MAY TO 20 MAY 1973

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR 3 WAS EXCEPTIONALLY LIGHT DURING THE WEEK. FROM 11 TO 18 MAY, GVN SOURCES REPORTED ONLY 81 INCIDENTS, 26 OF WHICH WERE MINING INCIDENTS. FRIENDLY CASUALTIES WERE LIGHT AT 10 KIA AND 57 WOUNDED. THE COMMUNISTS LOST 22 KILLED. MANY OF THE FRIENDLY CASUALTIES RESULTED FROM MINE EXPLOSIONS. TON LE CHAM RANGER BASE CAMP ALSO HAD A LIGHT WEEK OF COMMUNIST HARASSMENT. FROM 11 TO 18 MAY THE CAMP TOOK ONLY 247 ROUNDS OF MIXED 61 AND 82 MM MORTAR FIRE. THE COMMUNISTS DID NOT USE THEIR HEAVY ARTILLERY ON THE CAMP. COMMUNIST SHELLING DURING
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THE PERIOD CAUSED NEITHER CASUALTIES NOR ANY SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO THE CAMP. GENERAL MINH TOLD THE CONGEN THAT THE COMMUNISTS NEVER INTENDED TO OVERRUN TON LE CHAM. ACCORDING TO MINH, THE VC/ NVA WANTED TO FORCE THE GVN TO ABANDON THE STRATEGIC CAMP BY BREAKING RANGER MORALE THROUGH CONTINUOUS SHELLING. MINH SAID THIS WAS NOT IN THE CARDS. NEITHER THE RANGERS THEMSELVES, NOR THE MR 3 LEADERSHIP PLAN TO ABANDON TON LE CHAM AT THIS LATE DATE. JUST TO MAKE THE POINT, THE RANGERS CALLED IN ARTILLERY FROM AN LOC ON A VC/ NVA SUPPLY CONVOY MOVING NEAR THE CAMP ON 13 MAY. IT WAS PROBABLY JUST SUCH HARASSMENT AND INTERDICTION OF COMMUNIST SUPPLY LINES IN THE SAIGON RIVER CORRIDOR THAT THE COMMUNISTS WERE TRYING TO STOP WITH THEIR ATTACKS AND SHELLING.

2. ON 13 MAY, THE TAY NINH PROVINCE DEMOCRACY PARTY SWEPT TO A CONVINCING TRIUMPH IN THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD THROUGHOUT THE REGION. MORE THAN NINETY PERCENT OF THE WINNERS WERE FROM THE DEMOCRACY PARTY, BUT SO WERE NINETY PERCENT OF THE CANDIDATES* IN INTERVIEWS WITH CANDIDATES WHO WERE ELIMINATED BY THE PROVINCE ELECTION COMMITTEE, AND EVEN WITH INDIVIDUAL VOTERS, PROVINCE POLOFFS REPORTED CONSTANT COMPLAINTS OF GVN

PRESSURE TO VOTE FOR THE " STAR", THE SYMBOL OF THE DEMOCRACY PARTY.

3. CONSIDERING THE CONTINUED STAGNATION IN EFFORTS TO BREAK THROUGH POLISH/ HUNGARIAN OBSTRUCTIONISM IN THE REGION V ICCS, IT PROBABLY WOULDN' T BE TOO FAR OFF BASE TO SAY THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT OF THE ICCS WEEK WAS THE PARTY AND STRIP SHOW ORGANIZED ON THURSDAY EVENING IN BIEN HOA. THE ONLY OTHER ICCS DEVELOPMENT OF NOTE WAS A NEW HORROR STORY OF INEFFECTIVENESS; WHILE LIBERATION RADIO WAS CLAIMING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SINKING SEVERAL GVN BOATS IN LONG AN, AN ICCS REPORT ON THE INCIDENT WITH THE USUAL 2-2 SPLIT HAD BEEN FORWARDED TO SAIGON.

4. REVELATIONS OF GROSS MISCONDUCT AND CORRUPTION REACHING TO THE PROVINCE CHIEF HIMSELF, THREATENED TO ADD A FULL BLOWN SCANDAL TO THE ALREADY DEPRESSING SECURITY SITUATION PREVAILING IN HAU NGHIA PROVINCE. BY VARIOUS REPORTS AS MUCH AS 15 MILLION PIASTERS OF PROVINCE FUNDS ARE MISSING, AND PROVINCE CHIEF HAU HAS BEEN IMPLICATED, AT LEAST ENOUGH, TO JUSTIFY A THIRD INVESTIGATION BY THE PRIME MINISTER' S OFFICE. MEANWHILE, THE VC/ NVA CONTINUE ATTEMPTS AT RESUPPLY AND INFILTRATION INTO HAU NGHIA FROM

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CAMBODIA AT APPROXIMATELY THE LEVEL REPORTED IN APRIL.

5. ONE OF THE RUMORS WHICH MADE THE ROUNDS DURING THIS WEEK CONCERNED THE RESILIENT PHUOC LONG PROVINCE CHIEF, COLONEL LUU

YEM. RUMOR HAS IT THAT HE IS THE LOGICAL CHOICE TO SUCCEED
GENERAL DAU AS CG OF THE 18 TH ARVN DIVISION, IF AND WHEN DAU
IS TRANSFERRED TO THE JGS. KNOWING COLONEL YEM, IT WOULD NOT
SURPRISE US IF HE IS THE SOURCE OF THE RUMOR. HOWEVER, RUMORS
OF WHOLESALE SHIFTS IN DIVISION COMMANDS AND IN PROVINCE CHIEF
POSITIONS PROVED TO BE A BIT PREMATURE. GENERAL DAU OF THE 18 TH
ARVN DIVISION PRESIDED OVER THE 18 TH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY OF THE
FOUNDING OF HIS DIVISION. DAU SCOTCHED ALL RUMORS OF A SHIFT,
AND SEEMED QUITE PLEASED AT THE EFFECT THE CAREFULLY CHOSEN AND
BEAUTIFULLY PROPORTIONED SINGERS, ENTERTAINING AT THE CEREMONY,
WERE HAVING ON HIS GUESTS. WALKINSHAW UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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